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Photos could harm U.S., Morison witness says

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A top Central Intelligence Agency official testified yesterday that the three secret satellite photos Samuel L. Morison is accused of giving to a British defense journal could harm national security by providing the Soviets with valuable information about the KH-11 satellite.

But Richard E. Hineman, the deputy director for science and technology, also conceded under

A cross-examination that some of the information that could be gleaned from the photographs of a Soviet aircraft carrier being built on the Black Sea, which were published by *Jane's Defence Weekly* in early August 1984, could also be drawn from previously disclosed materials.

Twice before, there have been unauthorized releases of KH-11 photographs, including pictures left behind in the unsuccessful effort to rescue the American hostages in

Iran in 1980. The Soviets also acquired a copy of the satellite's design manual in 1978.

But Mr. Hineman testified yesterday at Mr. Morison's espionage trial in federal court in Baltimore that the Soviets would need "to have these pictures to know the status and the operational ability of that satellite at that time."

Mr. Hineman told the jury that the photographs would not only identify the device and show its range and the quality of its pictures, but could also suggest possible countermeasures.

The fact that three photographs were taken in six days in July 1984 could tip off the Soviets to the wide range of possible uses for the satellite, he said. They could conclude "If we're able to take this many photos of this kind of target, we must have a very capable system that is used against active military targets for early warning purposes."

Mr. Hineman provided various details about the satellite's capabilities, telling the jury it does not take pictures at low altitudes on cloudy days, that it takes pictures with electro-optical impulses which are transmitted almost immediately, and that it does not have to be directly on top of a subject to take photographs.

In fact, he testified, the pictures of the Black Sea shipyard published in *Jane's* were taken from a distance of 504 miles. That would be the equivalent of a satellite over Indianapolis taking pictures of the Inner Harbor in Baltimore, he said.

It is highly unusual for a top government official to talk in so much detail about satellites and U.S. intelligence-gathering efforts.

It is expected that the defense will try to use Mr. Hineman's testimony

to show that information about the satellite is not as "closely held" as the government has contended in its prosecution of Mr. Morison.

Mr. Morison, who worked as a civilian employee at the Naval Intelligence Support Center (NISC) in Suitland, is charged under federal espionage statutes with giving the secret photographs to *Jane's Defence Weekly*, unauthorized possession of excerpts from classified intelligence summaries that were allegedly found in his home in Crofton and theft of government property.

In a surprise tactical move yesterday that appeared to be aimed at establishing patriotic motives for Mr. Morison, defense attorneys dropped their objections to a confession Mr. Morison made to investigators, and it was presented to the jury.

In March, Judge Joseph H. Young had ruled that the confession was not admissible because Mr. Morison had given the statement after he had asked to see a lawyer and that investigators had violated his so-called Miranda rights.

Yesterday, David Swindle, an investigator with the Naval Investigative Service testifying about the confession, said that when Mr. Morison was arrested Oct. 1, 1984, he repeatedly denied sending the photographs to *Jane's*. But during the course of the interview, he finally admitted that he had taken them off a co-worker's desk, cut off the secret classification and mailed them to the British weekly.

Agent Swindle said he had told Mr. Morison that he thought Mr. Morison had sent the photos because "it was his way of educating the American people about the buildup of the Soviet navy."

"Sam just looked up at me and said, 'You hit it,'" Agent Swindle testified.